

Greater Tri-State StormReady Advisory Board By-Laws

ARTICLE I

The name of this organization shall be the Greater Tri-State StormReady Advisory (GTSSA) Board.

ARTICLE II : PURPOSE

It is the mission of the Greater Tri-State StormReady Advisory Board to help communities and counties prepare and mitigate for weather-related disasters, reducing the potential for weather related injuries and fatalities, by facilitating participation in the StormReady program. To this end, the GTSSA Board will be responsible for all steps leading to the recognition of the StormReady community or county within the County Warning Area (CWA) responsibility of the National Weather Service (NWS) Office La Crosse.

ARTICLE III : MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: The GTSSA Board shall operate on a CWA wide basis. Membership shall be restricted to personnel whose official duties and responsibilities reside within the boundaries of the CWA of NWS La Crosse, either in part or in entirety.

Section 2: In accordance with Section 2.3 of the National StormReady Organization and Operations Manual, the GTSSA Board shall, at a minimum, consist of the following members:

- 1 - NWS office Meteorologist in Charge.
- 1 - NWS office Warning Coordination Meteorologist
- 1 - State of Iowa Emergency Management Division designee
- 1 - State of Minnesota Division of Emergency Management designee
- 1 - State of Wisconsin Emergency Management designee
- 2 - City or County Emergency Management Officials from any of the three states

Additional membership may consist of state or local Emergency Managers, NWS personnel, and other individuals deemed beneficial to the StormReady program, providing that their area of responsibility falls within the guidelines as stated in Article III, Section 1 of the by-laws. New and subsequent board members shall be voted and approved by the remaining board members.

Section 3: Individuals requesting membership to the GTSSA Board must meet the criteria as set forth in Article III, Sections 1 and 2. These persons must submit a written request through an active member to the GTSSA Board. The GTSSA Board shall then act on this membership request within thirty (30) days of receipt, with acceptance/denial based upon a simple majority vote of the GTSSA Board members.

Section 4: Active members of the advisory board, who must relinquish their position on the Board, shall be replaced as needed, following the requirements of Article III, Sections 1 and 2. The position of Chairperson, when vacated, must be filled within thirty (30) days via a special election of the active advisory board members.

ARTICLE IV: STORMREADY ADVISORY BOARD ORGANIZATION

Section 1: The GTSSA Board shall consist of a maximum of 15 members, following the requirements of Article III, Sections 1 and 2 of these by-laws. The advisory board member positions shall be divided between state and/or local Emergency Managers and NWS personnel.

Section 2: A Chairperson and secretary shall be elected from the active members of the advisory board, by a simple majority vote.

Section 3: The Chairperson shall serve in this position for a two-year term. In the event the Chairperson position is vacated before the completion of a term, a new Chairperson shall be elected under the provisions of Article III, Section 4.

Section 4: The Chairperson shall be responsible for the following duties:

- Arranging meetings of the StormReady Advisory Board, including the date, time, method and location (if required) of said meetings.
- Notifying all Board members of the meetings.
- Setting the agenda for the meetings.
- Appointing sub-committees and other positions as deemed necessary.
- Delegating tasks as necessary.
- Providing annual reports to the Regional StormReady Advisory Board.
- Designating an acting Chairperson in the event the Chairperson is unable to attend a regularly scheduled meeting.
- Notifying National and Regional StormReady Advisory Boards, and State StormReady focal points, upon granting a community or county StormReady recognition.

Section 5: The advisory board Secretary shall be responsible for the following duties:

- Reviewing previous meeting minutes.
- Taking meeting notes.
- Assisting the Chairperson with applicants and follow-up paper work.

Section 6: It is the responsibility of the GTSSA Board members to:

- Attend all meetings regularly.
- Contribute ideas and suggestions for the improvement of the StormReady program.
- Provide assistance to the Chairperson as needed.
- Act as a valuable resource for those communities and counties who wish to participate in the StormReady program.
- Participate as team members, as directed by the Chairperson, when required to visit a StormReady program applicant and formally discuss the application.

ARTICLE V: GTSSA BOARD MEETINGS

Section 1: The GTSSA Board shall meet, at a minimum, on an annual basis. These meetings will be scheduled by the Chairperson as set forth under Article IV, Section 3 of these by-laws. Meetings will normally be held in the autumn. A quorum shall consist of a majority of advisory board members.

Section 2: The Chairperson, or the acting Chairperson, shall conduct the meeting using the following order of business:

- 1.Call to order.
- 2.Record Attendance.
- 3.Review minutes of previous meeting.
- 4.Unfinished GTSSA Board business.
- 5.New GTSSA Board business.
- 6.StormReady application and site visit review.
- 7.Tentative scheduling of the next GTSSA Board meeting.
- 8.Adjournment.

Section 3: Meetings, either by conference calls or GTSSA Board gatherings, can be requested as needed, by any advisory board member. The final determination as to the necessity of the meeting shall reside with the Chairperson, or the acting Chairperson.

ARTICLE VI: PROGRAM OPERATION

Application for StormReady recognition shall be a formal process, requiring a written application, verification visit(s), action by the GTSSA Board, and recognition of a community's, or county's successful completion of the requirements of the GTSSA Board StormReady program. The Greater Tri-State StormReady program shall follow the prescribed process as outlined in Sections 3.1 - 6.0 of the StormReady Organization and Operations Manual.

Jurisdictions applying for StormReady recognition shall fall under one of two categories:

- Community (including a city, town, or village)
- County

All jurisdictions shall be assessed based upon population as defined in Appendix A of the GTSSA board by-laws, with county population criteria including all incorporated and unincorporated areas within their respective boundaries. Criteria defined by the GTSSA board in Appendix A will be adjusted to meet or exceed any state's StormReady Advisory Board, with a minimum criteria set forth by Appendix A of the StormReady Organization and Operations Manual.

In order for a county applicant to be considered for StormReady recognition, all communities within their boundaries must be certified as meeting the appropriate criteria as defined in Appendix A of the StormReady Organization and Operations Manual.

Part A: Application Submission

Section 1: Any county or community desiring to be considered for StormReady recognition shall prepare a written application following the categories outlined in Appendix B of the StormReady Organization and Operations Manual. This application shall also include a brief narrative describing aspects of preparedness and planning activities. Once this is completed, the application shall be submitted to the proper GTSSA Board members at the La Crosse NWS office.

Section 2: Upon the receipt of an application, the GTSSA Board chairperson and/or secretary shall review the application for completeness. The Chairperson and/or secretary will notify the advisory board of the application status. Any application that fails to meet the requirements as prescribed within the StormReady Organization and Operations Manual, and any amendments as deemed necessary by the GTSSA Board, shall be returned to the applicant with written guidance or instructions on completing these requirements within thirty (30) days of receipt of the application. The proper advisory board member(s) should initiate frequent contact with the applicant, in order to assess progress toward completing the application process.

Section 3: If the application is properly completed, the proper advisory board member shall assemble a team to perform a verification visit, and forward the results of the verification visit to the advisory board within thirty (30) days receipt of the application.

Part B: Verification Visit

Section 1: The verification team shall consist of no less than two members. The team should be comprised of members of the GTSSA Board, but may include other individuals deemed qualified to make an assessment by the Chairperson. At least one (1) verification team member must be a member of the Advisory Board. The verification team should be composed of, at a minimum, one (1) NWS person and one (1) Emergency Manager from the same state as the applicant, but not from the applicant's county or community.

Section 2: During the verification visit, a Site Visit Summary (Appendix C of the StormReady Organization and Operations Manual, including any amendments by the applicant's state StormReady Advisory Board), shall be completed separately and signed by each member of the verification team.

Section 3: A review of the applicant's Hazardous Weather Plan is required during the site visit. This review may require the applicant to explain procedures to ensure the content meets all State, National, Regional and GTSSA Board criteria. A full copy of the applicant's Hazardous Weather Plan is not required by the advisory board, however the verification team may request a copy for further offsite review.

Section 4: Upon the completion of a site visit, the verification team shall forward their Site Visit Summaries, along with any additional comments or documentation deemed pertinent, to all members of the advisory board. All materials must be disseminated to the advisory board within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the initial application.

Section 5: If the verification team, during the course of the site visit, determines that the jurisdiction is non-compliant, the team must inform the applicant of these shortcomings. Any dispute between the applicant and the verification team regarding compliance with the StormReady program shall be forwarded, along with all relevant documentation, to the GTSSA Board for resolution.

Part C: Advisory Board Review

Section 1: The GTSSA Board members shall conduct a review of a jurisdiction's application, associated Site Visit Summaries and other documentation, and vote to approve or deny StormReady recognition within fourteen (14) days after receiving these materials from the verification team.

Section 2: The advisory board members shall either approve or deny an application for StormReady recognition by a simple majority vote of the advisory board members.

Section 3: If an application for recognition is not approved, the advisory board shall provide written guidance and the improvements needed to achieve recognition. Upon a written response from the applying jurisdiction, the Chairperson shall direct the appropriate advisory board member to schedule a subsequent verification visit as soon as possible.

Section 4: If a community or county disputes a decision made by the GTSSA Board, the dispute and all relevant documentation shall be forwarded by the Chairperson to the Regional StormReady Advisory Board for resolution.

Part D: The Recognition Process

Section 1: When, in the opinion of the GTSSA Board, an applicant has met the criteria for recognition, the advisory board has the authority to grant recognition. The Chairperson shall send this notification of recognition to the National and Regional StormReady Advisory Boards within seven (7) days of the advisory board's decision to grant this recognition. If necessary, notification of recognition will also be sent to the appropriate State StormReady focal point or board members.

Section 2: The Chairperson will direct the following actions to take place upon the advisory board's decision to grant recognition:

- Direct the appropriate NWS Meteorologist in Charge to send a formal notification letter to the successful applicant.
- Assist the successful applicant in receiving the proper number of StormReady roadway signs (two for a community applicant, four for a county applicant) if available, from the appropriate NWS office, along with instructions for acquiring additional signs.

Section 3: A jurisdiction's StormReady recognition shall be for a period of two (2) years from the date of the formal announcement.

Part E: Recognition Ceremony

Section 1: The Chairperson shall direct the appropriate Meteorologist in Charge to plan the details of the recognition announcement and ceremony between the applicant and the NWS office which has responsibility for the community or county.

Part F: Recognition, Monitoring, and Loss of Certification

Section 1: Whenever possible, all GTSSA Board members should use any opportunities that occur to monitor a jurisdiction's compliance with the StormReady program. Any formal concern by an Advisory Board member shall be immediately forwarded to the advisory board in whole.

Section 2: Upon the receipt of a formal concern regarding a jurisdiction's compliance, the advisory board shall review the concern. If this concern is valid, the advisory board holds the option to suspend the recognition for sixty (60) days while a review is conducted.

Section 3: If a review is deemed necessary by the advisory board, the Chairperson shall direct a team to perform a review of the jurisdiction's StormReady program recognition, following the guidelines outlined in Article VI, Part B, to be conducted within fifteen (15) days of the advisory board's decision to review. Once the review has been completed, the findings and all documentation shall be forwarded to all members of the advisory board within five (5) days.

Section 4: The Chairperson shall schedule a meeting of all GTSSA Board members as soon as possible after the receipt of the review team's findings and documentation. This meeting shall be scheduled within sixty (60) days of the initial action by the Advisory Board.

Section 5: If the advisory board deems the jurisdiction non-compliant with the StormReady program criteria, the Chairperson shall provide written notification of these deficiencies, and request that all StormReady road signs be removed, and prohibit the use of the StormReady logo. This notification must also provide the jurisdiction instructions on the appeals process. The Chairperson shall then inform the National and Regional StormReady Advisory Boards of this action. If necessary, notification of non-compliance will also be sent to the appropriate State StormReady focal point.

Section 6: If a jurisdiction disputes the non-compliance decision made by the advisory board, they must appeal the decision in writing within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the advisory board's decision. This appeal and all relevant documentation shall be forwarded by the Chairperson to the Regional StormReady Advisory Board for resolution. During the appeal process, no action shall take place against the local jurisdiction until the Regional StormReady Advisory Board makes a decision on this action.

Section 7: If the Regional StormReady Advisory Board finds the jurisdiction non-compliant, the Chairperson shall give the jurisdiction written notification of this decision, and request that all StormReady road signs be removed, and prohibit the use of the StormReady logo. The jurisdiction may request re-certification after ninety (90) days after de-certification by re-submitting an application as outlined in Article VI, Part A, Section 1 of these by-laws.

Part G: Re-recognition

Section 1: StormReady recognition is valid for two (2) years from the date of the formal announcement and/or ceremony. The appropriate member of the advisory board shall, six (6) months prior to the expiration of the recognition, notify the jurisdiction in writing of their need to re-apply. The applicable criteria shall be those published at the time of the notification.

ARTICLE VII: AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

Section 1: Proposed amendments to these by-laws must be submitted to the Chairperson in writing, no later than ten (10) days prior to a scheduled meeting. The amendment proposal shall then be forwarded by the Chairperson to all GTSSA Board members at least five (5) days prior to the scheduled meeting.

Section 2: The Chairperson has the authority to suspend those requirements outlined in Article VII, Section 1, if changes to the StormReady program require immediate action on these by-laws from the advisory board. The Chairperson shall inform all advisory board members of this action, and initiate a discussion and vote by the advisory board members on these amendments as soon as possible.

Section 3: Amendments of these by-laws shall be approved by a majority vote of two-thirds of the membership of the advisory board, provided that:

- Proposed amendments have been distributed to all advisory board members following the guidelines within Article VII, Section 1 or 2 of these by-laws, and
- All GTSSA Board members have been informed of the amendment vote.